

Magnesium's Many Benefits

“One of the body's most vital minerals, magnesium plays a key role in over 300 different reactions that affect our health. It controls essential body functions like ATP (energy) production, nerve signaling, proteins synthesis, and blood pressure regulation.” Magnesium also plays a role in immune function, blood sugar control, Vitamin D metabolism, and even mood. Magnesium is an essential nutrient; our bodies cannot make it themselves. Instead, we have to get it from food (like spinach, nuts, and pumpkin seeds). Close to half of Americans don't reach their daily needs, (That's 420 milligrams for men and 320 milligrams for women.) To make matters worse, research shows that stress further depletes our magnesium levels. Here is a list of the seven types of Magnesium available.

1. For Sleep: Magnesium Glycinate

Research suggests that supplementing with any type of magnesium can help with occasional sleeplessness.

What's special about magnesium glycinate, is that it includes the amino acid glycine. In large amounts, this amino is known for its calming properties.

One major bonus: Well-absorbed magnesium glycinate tends to be the gentlest form of magnesium on the stomach. Translation: no midnight bathroom runs. To reap the benefits, take between 100 and 300 milligrams an hour or two before bed.

2. To Ease Constipation: Magnesium Oxide

Because it's relatively cheap to produce, magnesium oxide is one of the most common forms of magnesium out there. However, this cheaper form of magnesium is less bioavailable than other forms and, for that reason, can cause stomach upset. While not ideal in many circumstances, taking magnesium oxide when you're having trouble going to the bathroom can be helpful. Just drink plenty of water when taking it, since increased trips to the toilet can dehydrate you.

3. For Digestive Health: Magnesium Citrate

If you're after more regular digestion but don't need something as intense as magnesium oxide, go for magnesium citrate. In magnesium citrate, the mineral is bound to citric acid, a mild laxative in its own right. So, while it's better absorbed than magnesium oxide, magnesium citrate can still lead to looser stools. That's why it's recommended for those experiencing occasional constipation or indigestion. Research has also found magnesium citrate to be effective at reducing leg cramps in pregnant women. Though you'll most often find magnesium citrate in powdered form, it's also available in tablets. To support healthy digestion, take 195 to 200 milligrams per day. Just make sure there's a bathroom nearby the first few times, in case your stomach reacts strongly. And, like with magnesium oxide, stay extra hydrated.

4. For Keeping It Natural: [Ionic Magnesium](#)

If you're all about naturally-sourced supplements, try ionic magnesium. This unique form of the mineral is naturally-occurring and pure, typically harvested from mineral-rich bodies of water. In this form, magnesium comes alongside small amounts of other minerals, like potassium. Stable in liquid form, ionic magnesium mixes well into drinks and foods. Plus, the body absorbs it easily. Since this mineral solution has a strong taste, try adding it to juice or smoothies.

5. For Easing Aches: [Magnesium Sulfate](#)

If you've ever taken an Epsom salts bath, you're already familiar with the soothing quality of magnesium sulfate, which is a salt form of magnesium.

While there isn't extensive research on Epsom salt baths, theory suggests the mineral quickly absorbs through the skin when you soak in it. The result: It hits your muscles fast. Soaking in magnesium won't increase your blood levels, but it *can* soothe your muscles. Epsom salt baths can reduce muscle cramps and pain, which is why they're a go-to for athletes. Most formulas suggest adding at least two cups of the salt to your bath and soaking for 20 minutes or so. It's a great way to unwind after a long day or tough workout. *Never* ingest magnesium sulfate. You'll most definitely experience terrible diarrhea.

6. For Easy Absorption: [Magnesium Chloride](#) Magnesium chloride (typically extracted from brine or sea water) also absorbs through the skin. Given that, you'll often find it in magnesium body creams or oils. Research has shown that applying magnesium chloride to the arms and legs reduced pain in people with fibromyalgia, suggesting that the skin is, in fact, a viable method of entry for the supplement. For that reason, anyone who struggles with digestive issues—especially malabsorption—should opt for this form of magnesium. Look for a cream or oil that clearly calls out magnesium chloride and contains few other ingredients.

7. For Brain Health and Mental Well-Being: [Magnesium L-Threonate](#)

Magnesium L-threonate is emerging as a promising form of the mineral. This is the only form of magnesium that has the ability to cross the blood brain barrier which means it's more available to support the metabolism and function of key brain neurons. It's been anecdotally touted as a nootropic, used by CEOs and Silicon Valley types for boosting cognitive performance. Additionally, some new research suggests that magnesium L-threonate can be used to support mood issues. Most magnesium L-threonate supplements contain 130 to 200 milligrams of magnesium per serving.

